Amendment in the Jute Packaging Material Act, 1987

3478. SHRI VEDPRAKASH P. GOYAL: Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are considering amendment of the Jute Packaging Material (Compulsory Use in Packing Commodities) Act, 1987 for use in the Cement Industry;

(b) whether a compromise formula for use of jute packaging in cement has been ironed out with the cement industry, if so, the details thereof;

(c) the price difference between a jute bag and a HDP bag of the same size;

(d) whether the Government agrees with many a disadvantages like loss of cement through pores of the bag in transit; effect of humidity; problem of packing warm cement as it come out from the machine and easier pilferage; and

(e) if so, the reasons for insisting on use of jute bags in cement industry despite the loss?

THE MINISTER OF TEXTILES (SHRI R.L. JALAPPA): (a) No, Sir.

(b) There is no compromise formula.

(c) Presently around Rs. 4/- per bag.

(d) and (e) The jute bags were used in cement industry without much problems upto end of eighties and were not considered unsuitable for packing cement. However, some perceptions differ in this matter and no final consenus has emerged as yet. Various study reports (like National Council for Cement and Building Materials) establish that seepage loss occurs in case of both HDPE and jute bags and is only marginally higher (about 0.4%) in case of jute bags. Jute bags are advantageous in use because of being more comfortable to handle, easier to grip, less harsh on hands, back & shoulders, more suitable for building stacks, could be easily printed with the aqueous or oil based inks, easily repairable, withstand hooking, and above all are bio-degrable, non-polluting and eco-friendly bags with higher re-use value. While fixing percentage of reservation for use of jute bags for packing cement and some other commodities the opinion of the concerned industry is also considered.

Meeting of Garment Exporters and Industry Representatives to Boost Exports

3479. SHRI GOVINDRAO ADIK: Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have called a meeting of all major textile garment exporters and industry representatives in New Delhi recently to discuss various issues relating to boosting of exports in the wake of continuing recession in garment exports;

(b) if so, the details of the agenda discussed and suggestions received and decisions taken at the meeting for remedial action;

(c) the performance of garment exports for the past three years *vis-a-vis* for the current year; and

(d) the details of package of incentives for textile garments sector in the years to come in highly competitive market?

THE MINISTER OF TEXTILES (SHRI R.L. JALAPPA): (a) and (b) Government have constituted a Co-ordination Committee of the Textile Export Promotion Councils under the Chairmanship of the Secretary (Textiles) in February, 1997 *inter-alia* to identify programmes to help increase textile and clothing exports. In the first meeting held on 24-4-97, various issued relating to the

slowing down of growth in textile exports and export targets for 1997-98 for the textile sector were discussed. In the second meeting held on 1-5-97, issues concerning the new EXIM policy were discussed.

(c) Garment exports during the last three years have been as follows:

Year	Value in US Million Dollars (Provisional)
1994-95	4433.83
1995-96	4453.31
1996-97	4762.10

Source: Apparel Export Promotion Council

The export figures for the current year *i.e.*, April, 1997 are not yet available.

(d) In order to boost the exports of textiles, Government have been taking a number of steps, which include encouraging exporters to participate in buyer-seller meets; fairs and exhibitions; enabling import of capital goods at concessional duty for export production; special arrangements for duty free import of raw materials for export production; ensuring increased availability of export credit etc.

Loss of Jobs of Textiles Workers of NTC

3480. SHRI GOVINDRAM MIRI:
SHRI SHIV CHARAN SINGH:

Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that about 67,000 textiles workers of NTC are likely to lose their jobs;

(b) if so, details thereof NTC—Unit-wise;

(c) the circumstances that led to such a situation; and

(d) the steps, if any, taken/ contemplated by Government to stop/ contain it?

THE MINISTER OF TEXTILES (SHRI R.L. JALAPPA): (a) to (d) The mills under NTC have been incurring losses due to obsolete machinery, excess manpower, acute shortage of working capital etc. On account of their net worth erosion, 8 out of the 9 subsidiary corporations of NTC have been referred to and declared sick by the BIFR.

Government approved in May, 1995 a revised Turn Around Plan involving modernisation of 79 mills at an outlay of Rs. 2005.72 crores, restructuring of 36 unviable mills into 18 viable mills by merger and coverage of 32,900 employees under VRS. The funds for modernisation were to come from the sale of surplus lands and assets. This package has been placed before the BIFR which has found the same not viable in respect of four subsidiaries, namely, NTC(Guj.), NTC(UP), NTC(MP) and NTC(WBAB&O) Ltds. due to their net worth not becoming positive in the stipulated period of 10 years unless Government loans and interest thereon are waived. The BIFR has, therefore, issued show cause notices for winding up these four subsidiaries. In respect of the remaining four ssubsidiaries, namely, NTC(APKK&M), NTC(MN), NTC(SM) and NTC(DP&R) Ltd., the BIFR has